

Application No.: 10/796,692
Filing Date: March 9, 2004

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please replace all prior versions of the claims with the following listing of the claims. Please note that in the amendments to the claims, deletions are indicated by strikethrough (e.g. ~~deletion~~) or double brackets (e.g. [[word]]) and additions to the claims are underlined (e.g. addition).

1. **(Previously Presented)** An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, at least one wheel, and first and second suspension arms each including a plurality of ends and being configured to suspend the wheel from the frame, the frame including two frame members extending generally fore to aft, the vehicle further comprising front and rear sets of retainers being coupled to the frame members, the front set of retainers comprising a first upper retainer and a second lower retainer, the rear set of retainers comprising a third upper retainer and a fourth lower retainer, the rear set of retainers being disposed forwardly relative to a steering shaft of the vehicle, the first and third retainers retaining a first upper suspension arm so as to permit the first upper suspension arm to swing relative to the frame, the second and fourth retainers retaining a second lower suspension arm so as to permit the second lower suspension arm to swing relative to the frame, the third upper retainer being spaced from the fourth lower retainer at a spacing in the fore-to-aft direction, the spacing being larger than any fore-to-aft spacing between the first upper and second lower retainers.
2. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the retainers extend generally vertically relative to the frame members.
3. **(Canceled)**
4. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 1 wherein the second suspension arm is spaced apart from the first suspension arm generally in the vertical direction, the vehicle additionally comprising a link coupling the first and second suspension arms with each other, the link being coupled to the wheel.
5. **(Original)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 4, wherein the tops of the retainers are inclined outward relative to a longitudinal center plane of the frame, which extends generally vertically and fore to aft.

6. **(Original)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 5, wherein the first suspension arm is disposed above the second suspension arm, and the second suspension arm is longer than the first suspension arm.

7. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 1, wherein each end of the respective suspension arms comprises a mount member, each one of the retainers has first and second surfaces opposing each other, and each one of the mount members is journaled between the first and second surfaces of one of the retainers.

8. **(Original)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 7, wherein the first and second surfaces extend generally vertically.

9. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 8, wherein the first and second surfaces extend outward from the respective frame member relative to a longitudinal center plane of the frame, which extends generally vertically and fore to aft.

10. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 7, wherein the first and second surfaces extend outward from the respective frame member relative to a longitudinal center plane of the frame, which extends generally vertically and fore to aft.

11. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 10, wherein each one end of the first and second surfaces is connected to the respective frame member.

12. **(Original)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 7, wherein the mount members are positioned at different elevations relative to each other.

13. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 12, wherein the mount member of a respective suspension arm, which is disposed more forward than the other mount member of the respective suspension arm, is positioned higher than the other mount member.

14. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 1, wherein the respective ones of the retainers are connected to the respective frame member.

15. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 14, wherein at least one of the two frame members has a vertical surface extending generally vertically, and the respective retainers are at least partially connected to the vertical surface.

16. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 15, wherein the at least one of the two frame members is a rectangular parallelepiped member.

17. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 1 wherein the frame additionally comprises a set of support members and the vehicle further comprises a link, the support members extending generally vertically, the support members spaced apart from each other fore to aft, and wherein at least one of the retainers is placed on one of the support members and at least another of the retainers is placed on another one of the support members, the link coupling together the first and second suspension arms, the link being coupled to the wheel.

18. **(Currently Amended)** An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, at least one wheel rotatable about an axis, a first upper suspension arm configured to suspend the wheel from the frame, the first upper suspension arm having first and second ends connected to the frame, a second lower suspension arm configured to suspend the wheel from the frame, the second lower suspension arm having third and forth ends connected to the frame, the frame including at least first and second vertical members extending generally vertically, the first vertical member supporting the first end of the first upper suspension arm and the third end of the second lower suspension arm such that at least a portion of each of the first end and the third end[[s]] overlaps are aligned with the first vertical member as seen in side view, the second vertical member being disposed on a generally opposite side of said first upper suspension arm from said first end, the second vertical member supporting the second end of the first upper suspension arm and the fourth end of the second lower suspension arm such that at least a portion of each of the second end and the fourth end[[s]] overlaps are aligned with the second vertical member as seen in side view, the vertical members spaced apart from each other fore to aft and arranged on opposite sides of the axis of the wheel, the first upper suspension arm being coupled to the vertical members in a manner permitting the suspension arm to swing relative to the frame and at least the third end of the second suspension member being coupled to at least the first vertical member in a manner permitting the suspension arm to swing relative to the frame.

19. **(Original)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 18, wherein the frame additionally includes first and second horizontal members extending generally horizontally fore to aft to support the vertical members.

20. **(Currently Amended)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 18, wherein the second suspension arm is spaced vertically apart from the first upper suspension arm, the second

suspension arm also being coupled to the vertical members, and a link coupling the first and second suspension arms together, the link supporting the wheel.

21. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 20, wherein the vertical members are inclined outward and upward relative to a longitudinal center plane of the frame, that extends generally vertically and fore to aft.

22. **(Currently Amended)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 21, wherein the first upper suspension arm is disposed above the second suspension arm, and the second suspension arm is longer than the first suspension arm.

23. **(Previously Presented)** An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, at least one wheel, and first and second suspension arms being configured to suspend the wheel from the frame, the frame including two horizontal members extending generally horizontally fore to aft, each end of the first and second suspension arms comprising a mount member, each mount member defining a pivot axis, the vehicle further comprising first and second sets of retainers being coupled to the horizontal members, each of the retainers of the first set being configured to retain the mount members of the first suspension arm with the pivot axes thereof being oriented parallel and noncoaxial with respect to each other, the retainers of the second set each being configured to retain the mount members of the second suspension arm with the pivot axes thereof being oriented parallel and noncoaxial with respect to each other, the first and second suspension arms being pivotable relative to the respective ones of the first and second sets of retainers.

24. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 23, wherein each of the first and second sets of retainers comprises a set of brackets spaced apart from each other fore to aft and each one of the brackets journals a respective one of the mount members for pivotal movement.

25. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 24, wherein the mount members of at least one of the first and second sets are positioned at different elevations relative to each other.

26. **(Original)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 25, wherein an upper portion of one of the brackets journals one of the mount members, a lower portion of the other bracket journals the other mount member.

27. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 25, wherein the mount member of a respective suspension arm, which is disposed more forward than the other mount member of the respective suspension arm, is positioned higher than the other mount member.

28. **(Original)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 24, wherein each one of the brackets has first and second surfaces opposing each other, and each one of the mount members is journaled between the first and second surfaces of the respective bracket.

29. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 28, wherein each one end of the first and second surfaces is connected to a respective vertical surface of a respective horizontal member.

30. **(Original)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 27, wherein the suspension arm has a link to suspend an axle of the wheel, the link has a first portion coupled with the suspension arm and a second portion coupled with the axle of the wheel, and the first portion is positioned forward of the second portion.

31. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 27 wherein the suspension arm has a link to suspend an axle of the wheel, the link coupling together the first and second suspension arms, the link being coupled to the wheel.

32. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in claim 23 additionally comprising a prime mover supported by the frame to power the wheel, and the retainers are positioned on the frame at a location forward of the prime mover.

33. **(Previously Presented)** An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, first and second suspension arms, and first and second sets of retainers, the frame extending generally horizontally fore to aft, the first and second suspension arms each including a plurality of ends and being configured to suspend a wheel from the frame, the first and second sets of retainers being coupled to the frame, the retainers of the first set being spaced apart from each other fore to aft at a first distance, the retainers of the second set being spaced apart from each other fore to aft at a second distance, the first and second distances being unequal, a front retainer of each set being configured to retain a front end of a respective suspension arm and a rear retainer of each set being configured to retain a rear end of a respective suspension arm in a manner permitting the respective suspension arm to swing relative to the respective set of retainers, the front

retainers being spaced apart from each other in a fore to aft direction by a distance which is smaller than a distance by which the rear retainers are spaced apart from each other in a fore to aft direction, the rear retainers being disposed forwardly relative to a steering shaft of the vehicle.

34. **(Previously Presented)** An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, first and second suspension arms, and first and second sets of retainers, the frame extending generally horizontally fore to aft, the first and second suspension arms each including a plurality of ends and being configured to suspend a wheel from the frame, each end of the first and second suspension arms comprising a mount member, each mount member defining a pivot axis, the first and second sets of retainers being coupled to the frame, each of the retainers of the first set being configured to retain the mount members of the first suspension arm with the pivot axes thereof being oriented parallel and noncoaxial with respect to each other, the retainers of the second set each being configured to retain the mount members of the second suspension arm with the pivot axes thereof being oriented parallel and noncoaxial with respect to each other, the first and second suspension arms being pivotable relative to the respective ones of the first and second sets of retainers.

35. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 18 additionally comprising a rear differential coupled to the wheel, one of the first and second vertical members being disposed generally forward of the rear differential and the other one of the first and second vertical members being disposed generally rearward of the rear differential.

36. **(Previously Presented)** An off-road vehicle comprising a frame and upper and lower suspension arms, the frame extending generally horizontally fore to aft, the upper and lower suspension arms each including two ends being pivotally coupled to the frame, the ends of upper suspension arm being spaced apart from each other fore to aft at a first length, the ends of lower suspension arm being spaced apart from each other fore to aft at a second length, wherein a midpoint of the first length is not aligned with a midpoint of the second length along a vertical line, wherein rear ends of the upper and lower suspension arms are disposed forwardly relative to a steering shaft of the vehicle.

37. **(Canceled)**

38. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the fore-to-aft spacing between the first upper and the second lower retainers is greater than zero.

39. **(Previously Presented)** An off-road vehicle comprising a frame, at least one wheel, and first and second suspension arms each including a plurality of ends and being configured to suspend the wheel from the frame, the frame including two frame members extending generally fore to aft, the vehicle further comprising at least a first forward-most upper retainer, a first rearward-most upper retainer, a second forward-most lower retainer, and a second rearward-most lower retainer, the first forward-most and rearward-most upper retainers pivotally connecting the first suspension arm to the frame, the second forward-most and rearward-most lower retainers connecting the second suspension arm to the frame, wherein the first forward-most upper retainer is disposed forwardly relative to the second forward-most lower retainer and the first rearward-most upper retainer is disposed forwardly relative to the second rearward-most lower retainer, the first rearward-most upper retainer and second rearward-most lower retainer being disposed forwardly relative to a steering shaft of the vehicle.

40. **(Currently Amended)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 18, wherein at least a portion of a rear differential is located above at least a portion of the first upper suspension arm.

41. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the first upper retainer is spaced from the second lower retainer in the fore-to-aft direction.

42. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein in a side elevational view of the vehicle, the rear set of retainers is disposed adjacent to a front end of the steering shaft.

43. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the steering shaft is coupled to a rack-and-pinion assembly in a position disposed rearwardly relative to an axis of the wheel.

44. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein in a side elevational view of the vehicle, a front end of the steering shaft extends toward the rear set of retainers.

45. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the first upper retainer and the second lower retainer are disposed forward from a front end of the steering shaft.

Application No.: 10/796,692
Filing Date: March 9, 2004

46. **(Previously Presented)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 1, wherein the third upper retainer is disposed forward from a front end of the steering shaft and the fourth lower retainer is disposed rearward from the front end of the steering shaft.

47. **(New)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 18, wherein the first end of the first upper suspension arm and the third end of the second lower suspension arm are coupled to the first vertical member via a first set of retainers.

48. **(New)** The off-road vehicle as set forth in Claim 18, wherein the second end of the first upper suspension arm and the fourth end of the second lower suspension arm are coupled to the second vertical member via a second set of retainers.